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owners' protection and indemnity associations, or other persons, each of which must be acceptable to the Director, NPFC.

Master Certificate means a Certificate issued under this subpart to a person who is a builder, repairer, scrapper, lessor, or seller of a vessel and is acting as the vessel's operator.

Offshore supply vessel has the same meaning as set forth in 46 U.S.C. 2101.

OPA 90 means the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (33 U.S.C. 2701, *et seq.*).

Operator means a person who is an owner, a demise charterer, or other contractor, who conducts the operation of, or who is responsible for the operation of, a vessel. A builder, repairer, scrapper, lessor, or seller who is responsible, or who agrees by contract to become responsible, for a vessel is an operator. A time or voyage charterer that does not assume responsibility for the operation of a vessel is not an operator for the purposes of this subpart.

Owner means any person holding legal or equitable title to a vessel. In a case where a U.S. Coast Guard Certificate of Documentation or equivalent document has been issued, the owner is considered to be the person or persons whose name or names appear thereon as owner. Owner does not include a person who, without participating in the management of a vessel, holds indicia of ownership primarily to protect the owner's security interest in the vessel.

Public vessel means a vessel owned or bareboat chartered by the United States, or by a State or political subdivision thereof, or by a foreign nation, except when the vessel is engaged in commerce.

Responsible party, for purposes of OPA 90 financial responsibility has the same meaning as defined at 33 U.S.C. 2701(32), and for purposes of CERCLA financial responsibility means any person who is an owner or operator, as defined at 42 U.S.C. 9601(20), including any person chartering a vessel by demise.

Self-elevating lift vessel means a vessel with movable legs capable of raising its hull above the surface of the sea and that is an offshore work boat (such as a work barge) that does not engage in drilling operations.

Tank vessel means a vessel (other than an offshore supply vessel, a fish-

ing vessel or a fish tender vessel of 750 gross tons or less that transfers fuel without charge to a fishing vessel owned by the same person, or a towing or pushing vessel (tug) simply because it has in its custody a tank barge) that is constructed or adapted to carry, or that carries, oil or liquid hazardous material in bulk as cargo or cargo residue, and that—

- (1) Is a vessel of the United States;
 - (2) Operates on the navigable waters;
- or
- (3) Transfers oil or hazardous material in a place subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

Total applicable amount means the amount determined under §138.80(f)(3).

Vessel means every description of watercraft or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on water.

[USCG-2005-21780, 73 FR 53697, Sept. 17, 2008, as amended by USCG-2012-0306, 77 FR 37315, June 21, 2012]

§ 138.30 General.

(a) The regulations in this subpart set forth the procedures for an operator of a vessel subject to this subpart to demonstrate that the responsible parties of the vessel are financially able to meet their potential liability for costs and damages in the applicable amounts set forth in this subpart at §138.80(f). Although the owners, operators, and demise charterers of a vessel are strictly, jointly and severally liable under OPA 90 and CERCLA for the costs and damages resulting from each incident or release or threatened release, together they need only establish and maintain evidence of financial responsibility under this subpart equal to the combined OPA 90 and CERCLA limits of liability arising from a single incident and a single release, or threatened release. Only that portion of the total applicable amount of financial responsibility demonstrated under this subpart with respect to—

- (1) OPA 90 is required to be made available by a vessel's responsible parties and guarantors for the costs and damages related to an incident where there is not also a release or threatened release; and

(2) CERCLA is required to be made available by a vessel's responsible parties and guarantors for the costs and damages related to a release or threatened release where there is not also an incident. A guarantor (or a self-insurer for whom the exceptions to limitations of liability are not applicable), therefore, is not required to apply the entire total applicable amount of financial responsibility demonstrated under this subpart to an incident involving oil alone or a release or threatened release involving a hazardous substance alone.

(b) Where a vessel is operated by its owner or demise charterer, or the owner or demise charterer is responsible for its operation, the owner or demise charterer is considered to be the operator for purposes of this subpart, and must submit the Application and requests for renewal for a Certificate. In all other cases, the vessel operator must submit the Application or requests for renewal.

(c) For a United States-flag vessel, the applicable gross tons or gross tonnage, as referred to in this part, is determined as follows:

(1) For a documented U.S. vessel measured under both 46 U.S.C. Chapters 143 (Convention Measurement) and 145 (Regulatory Measurement). The vessel's regulatory gross tonnage is used to determine whether the vessel exceeds 300 gross tons where that threshold applies under the Acts. If the vessel's regulatory gross tonnage is determined under the Dual Measurement System in 46 CFR part 69, subpart D, the higher gross tonnage is the regulatory gross tonnage for the purposes of determining whether the vessel meets the 300 gross ton threshold. The vessel's gross tonnage as measured under the International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships, 1969 (Convention), is used to determine the vessel's required applicable amounts of financial responsibility, and limit of liability under Section 1004 of OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2704), including subpart B of this part, and Section 107 of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. 9607).

(2) For all other United States vessels. The vessel's gross tonnage under 46 CFR part 69 is used for determining the vessel's 300 gross ton threshold, the required applicable amounts of finan-

cial responsibility, and limits of liability under Section 1004 of OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2704), including subpart B of this part, and Section 107 of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. 9607). If the vessel's gross tonnage is determined under the Dual Measurement System, the higher gross tonnage is used in all determinations.

(d) For a vessel of a foreign country that is a party to the Convention, gross tons or gross tonnage, as referred to in this part, is determined as follows:

(1) For a vessel assigned, or presently required to be assigned, gross tonnage under Annex I of the Convention. The vessel's gross tonnage as measured under Annex I of the Convention is used for determining the 300 gross ton threshold, if applicable, the required applicable amounts of financial responsibility, and limits of liability under Section 1004(a) of OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2704), including subpart B of this part, and under Section 107 of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. 9607).

(2) For a vessel not presently required to be assigned gross tonnage under Annex I of the Convention. The highest gross tonnage that appears on the vessel's U.S. Coast Guard Certificate of Documentation or equivalent document and that is acceptable to the Coast Guard under 46 U.S.C. chapter 143 is used for determining the 300 gross ton threshold, if applicable, the required applicable amounts of financial responsibility, and limits of liability under Section 1004 of OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2704), including subpart B of this part, and Section 107 of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. 9607). If the vessel has no document, or the gross tonnage appearing on the document is not acceptable under 46 U.S.C. chapter 143, the vessel's gross tonnage is determined by applying the Convention Measurement System under 46 CFR part 69, subpart B, or if applicable, the Simplified Measurement System under 46 CFR part 69, subpart E. The measurement standards applied are subject to applicable international agreements to which the United States Government is a party.

(e) For a vessel of a foreign country that is not a party to the Convention, gross tons or gross tonnage, as referred to in this part, is determined as follows:

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(1) For a vessel measured under laws and regulations found by the Commandant to be similar to Annex I of the Convention. The vessel's gross tonnage under the similar laws and regulations is used for determining the 300 gross ton threshold, if applicable, the required applicable amounts of financial responsibility, and limits of liability under Section 1004 of OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2704), including subpart B of this part, and Section 107 of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. 9607). The measurement standards applied are subject to applicable international agreements to which the United States Government is a party.

(2) For a vessel not measured under laws and regulations found by the Commandant to be similar to Annex I of the Convention. The vessel's gross tonnage under 46 CFR part 69, subpart B, or, if applicable, subpart E, is used for determining the 300 gross ton threshold, if applicable, the required applicable amount of financial responsibility, and the limits of liability under Section 1004 of OPA 90 (33 U.S.C. 2704), including subpart B of this part, and Section 107 of CERCLA (42 U.S.C. 9607). The measurement standards applied are subject to applicable international agreements to which the United States is a party.

(f) A person who agrees to act as a guarantor or a self-insurer is bound by the vessel's gross tonnage as determined under paragraphs (c), (d), or (e) of this section, regardless of what gross tonnage is specified in an Application or guaranty form submitted under this subpart. Guarantors, however, may limit their liability under a guaranty of financial responsibility to the applicable gross tonnage appearing on a vessel's International Tonnage Certificate or other official, applicable certificate of measurement and will not incur any greater liability with respect to that guaranty, except when the guarantors knew or should have known that the applicable tonnage certificate was incorrect.

§ 138.40 Forms.

All forms referred to in this subpart may be obtained from NPFC by requesting them in writing at the address given in § 138.45(a) or by clicking on the Forms link at the NPFC E-COFR Web

site, <https://npfc.uscg.mil/cofr/default.aspx>.

[USCG-2005-21780, 73 FR 53697, Sept. 17, 2008, as amended by USCG-2012-0306, 77 FR 37315, June 21, 2012]

§ 138.45 Where to apply for and renew Certificates.

(a) An operator must submit all Applications for a Certificate and all requests for renewal of a Certificate, together with all evidence of financial responsibility required under § 138.80 and all fees required under § 138.130, to the NPFC at the following address: Director National Pollution Funds Center, NPFC CV MS 7100, U.S. Coast Guard, 4200 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1000, Arlington, VA 20598-7100, telephone (202) 493-6780, Telefax (202) 493-6781; or electronically using NPFC's E-COFR Web-based process at <https://npfc.uscg.mil/cofr/default.aspx>

(b) All requests you have for assistance in completing Applications, requests for renewal and other submissions under this subpart, including telephone inquiries, should be directed to the U.S. Coast Guard NPFC at the addresses in paragraph (a) of this section.

[USCG-2005-21780, 73 FR 53697, Sept. 17, 2008, as amended by USCG-2009-0416, 74 FR 27441, June 10, 2009; USCG-2012-0306, 77 FR 37315, June 21, 2012]

§ 138.50 Time to apply.

(a) A vessel operator who wishes to obtain a Certificate must submit a completed Application form and all required supporting evidence of financial responsibility, and must pay all applicable fees, at least 21 days prior to the date the Certificate is required. The Director, NPFC, may grant an extension of this 21-day deadline upon written request and for good cause shown. An applicant seeking an extension of this deadline must set forth the reasons for the extension request and deliver the request to the Director, NPFC, at least 15 days before the deadline. The Director, NPFC, will not consider a request for an extension of more than 60 days.

(b) The Director, NPFC, generally processes Applications and requests for renewal in the order in which they are received at the NPFC.